

# ABSTRACT

## SOCIAL WORK

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### A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY STRUCTURE,

### SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG

### AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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This study describes the relationship between family structure, socio-economic status, and self-esteem among African American college students. There is evidence that supports the existence of a positive relationship between socio-economic status and parental involvement. The most common measures of socio-economic status, parental education, and family income have shown to be strong predictors of children's educational success.

The study suggests that there is no statistically significant relationship between the family structures and self-esteem among African American students. Furthermore, this study also reveals that there is not a statistical relationship between the family structure and self-esteem of African American college students.

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY STRUCTURE,  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG  
AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

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A THESIS  
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BY  
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## CHAPTER I

### INTRODUCTION

Some scholars believe that self-esteem improves academic achievement, and that there are programs specifically designed to help students succeed by boosting their self-esteem. Moreover, students who feel good about themselves do better in school than do those who have low self-worth. Proponents of the self-esteem model contend that self-esteem leads to academic success (Ross & Broh, 2000).

Self-esteem is defined as the perception of oneself as a person of worth. Furthermore, self-esteem has beneficial emotional consequences such as low levels of depression, however, its' behavioral consequences for academic success are less certain (Ross & Broh, 2000).

Research has discovered that black self-esteem is a result from reflected appraisals in one's immediate social network such as teachers, parents, and friends and not on reflected appraisals in the larger social order, which in this case is a white society that may marginalize and devalue blacks (Ross & Broh, 2000).

Perceptions of self-esteem stem from social attachments to close friends and family members that reflect positively on a person and provide interpersonal support. Of these close attachments, those with a parent(s) are central to the development of children's self-esteem (Ross & Broh, 2000).



Moreover, there are also other factors that contribute to student's being successful in academic settings. For instance, there is evidence that supports the existence of a positive relationship between socio-economic status and parental involvement. The most common measures of socio-economic status, parental education, and family income have been shown to be strong predictors of children's educational success. In addition, parents with greater formal education training have been found to provide home environments that support and encourage educational and related activities (Yan, 1999).

#### Statement of the Problem

Social factors such as discrimination, prejudice, and economic deprivation hinder the motivation and academic achievement of black students as well as contribute to their underrepresentation in gifted educational programs. Social inequities are important sources of vulnerability for black youth who, when confronted with racism and discrimination may develop an oppositional social identity. Moreover, they may deliberately perform poorly in school, rebel against teachers and school administrators (Ford & Harris, 1996).

Furthermore, it has also been discovered that some black students are less confident that hard work, effort, and academic success will result in receiving occupational and fiscal rewards with their educational credentials. Underachievement, as manifested by poor grades, lack of effort, dropping out of school, or not reaching academic potential is a serious and persistent problem among all students, particularly black students. Specifically, black students have higher dropout rates, earn lower grades,

and participate in less academically rigorous classes and programs than do white students (Ford & Harris, 1996).

### Purpose of the Study

The purpose of this study is to explore and analyze the relationship between socio-economic status, family structure, and self-esteem among African American college students. The study will also analyze the demographics of the population served.

### Research Questions

The research questions of the study were as follows:

1. Is there a relationship between the socio-economic status of the family of African American students and self-esteem?
2. Is there a relationship between the family structure of African American students and self-esteem?

### Hypotheses

The null hypotheses of the study were as follows:

1. There is no statistical significance relationship between the socio-economic status of an African American student and self-esteem.
2. There is no statistical significance relationship between the family structure of an African American student and self-esteem.

### Significance of the Study

Research in *Journal of Blacks in Higher Education* (2002), has shown that African Americans are increasing in college attendance and professional programs. However, there is also research that acknowledges that schools should have programs with perspectives that are supportive towards African American students. In other words, the researcher thinks that schools that do not have specific programs geared towards African Americans should include them so that African American attendance in colleges or universities can remain constant. The researcher believes that African American students need these programs to be successful with their educational goals.

The researcher also believes that effective parenting, family and financial support is necessary in order to provide a stable environment for African American students. As indicated in research, the family influences the student by encouraging them, so a strong family structure that can provide financial support is needed to allow the student to get that support (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

## CHAPTER II

### REVIEW OF LITERATURE

#### Historical Perspective

The purpose of presenting this review of literature was to lay a scholarly foundation in order to establish the basis for performing this outcome evaluation. This chapter is a review of literature on African American students and their enrollment in higher education programs. The review also covers how institutions of higher education provide support and assistance to African American college students.

African Americans have historically been under-represented in American higher education. For example, in 1970, more than 11% of the U.S. population was of African American descent, but only 7% of students enrolled in colleges and universities were black. By 1990, the number of blacks grew to represent nearly 12% of the national population, yet, in 1994, only 10.7% of college students were African American (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

Experts who study enrollment patterns in higher education have searched for answers to explain this disparity. One explanation relates to the college-going rates between whites and blacks. For instance, in the 1989-1990 academic years, only 57.3% of African Americans enrolled in higher education immediately after high school compared to 71.7% of their white counterparts. To improve disproportionately low

enrollment rates, colleges and universities try to support black students (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

There are multiple forms of support that institutions of higher education provide to students. One form of support is academic. Academic support may be manifested in tutoring services, contact with faculty, and peer monitoring programs. Academic support is also provided through campus facilities like libraries and computer laboratories that support student learning (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

A second form of support that students need is emotional support. This includes support students receive during periods of stress. Moreover, this can take the form of providing assistance with coping or serving as a buffer in times of crisis (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

Another form of support is social support. Social support relates to the friendship and social networks formed by students. Student clubs and organizations are examples of social support networks (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

A fourth form of support is financial support. One form of financial support is present in the various federal and state need-based programs. For instance, students may be awarded Pell Grants or guaranteed student loans through the federal government (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

Some campuses have made special efforts to provide additional support for black students. Support efforts range from the construction of cultural centers on predominately white campuses (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

However, despite the efforts of administrators on predominately white campuses, many black students seek support from resources beyond those provided by the campus

community, particularly from families. Therefore, frequent contact with family members is beneficial for black students attending majority institutions (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

### African American College Students

Youth of America are instructed by their elders that to make it in the world they must stay in high school and earn their diploma. In addition, the conventional wisdom is that to be successful in life, students should attend college and graduate or professional school (Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 2002).

Increasingly, black students are heeding the call to further their higher education. Today there are more than 147,000 black students enrolled in graduate schools across the nation. Another 22,500 black students are enrolled in professional schools. In 1980, blacks made up 5.6% of all students in American graduate schools. Now blacks make up 8.2% of all students in U.S. graduate programs (Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 2002).

A survey by the Department of Education shows that nearly half of all African American students enrolled in college are working full-time, more than one in four have children or other dependants, and 31% are over the age of 30 (Journal of Blacks in Higher Education, 2002).

### Family Structure of African Americans

The family is a conduit for educational attainment for several reasons. First, families are primary sources of academic potential. For instance, the family is the first unit to develop and nurture the student's capacity for learning. Secondly, families set the parameters of community standards within the home environment. Such boundaries

affect a student's outlook on the larger social order. Parents are also influential in creating the context in which events and phenomena are evaluated. In this case, families provide the background for explaining meaning in life and the world. Another influence of family relates to social context. Parents provide students with a social environment that influences the way in which students view education. Furthermore, this can take place through school choice, career options, and overall higher educational aspirations (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

In examining the family and organizational structure of black families, Dressler (1987) found that members of black households are more likely to seek and receive informal social and emotional support from family members. Traditionally, African Americans have relied on trusted family members or close friends to disclose and resolve sensitive issues (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

In another study, Kiah (1992) examined traits and attitudes related to black college students' persistence and achievement. There is a strong correlation between family cohesion and black student success. Nearly 70% of black students reported that their family unit is cohesive. That is, their family relationships are healthy and offer the appropriate amount of support and interaction. In addition, roughly 48% of black students perceived their mothers as the most influential family member with respect to their attitudes about education (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

Culturally, black families are not monolithic. Diversity among black families may exist politically, socially, and economically. However, there are shared characteristics among most black families. For instance, black families tend to have a strong religious orientation because they embrace the value of religion and its liberating

power. They also relish the reliance on a higher power and the practical application of religious principles in life (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

Black families also are characterized by valuing extended kin relationships. Family kinship among blacks may also be described as fictive. These kinds of kinship bonds are unrelated by blood; however, they are viewed as equally significant as blood relationships. Fictive kinship networks may include neighbors, church members, and friends (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

Finally, resiliency is a hallmark trait within black families. Resiliency relates to the ability of black families to endure, survive, and develop buoyancy in the face of crises and adversities. It also relates to the helping tradition present within nuclear and extended kin relationships (Herndon & Hirt, 2004).

#### Socio-Economic Status of African Americans

A long standing issue in education is the question of how cultural differences affect the educational process and the associated tests and measurements. A highly visible cultural variable which has tended to differentiate blacks and whites is socio-economic status. This variable generally is defined in terms of education, income, and occupation (Stanfiel, 1973).

From an educational standpoint, socio-economic status is a derivative or summarizing variable comprised of two major components: intelligence and achievement values and motivation. As one of the components subsumed under socio-economic status, measured intelligence might be expected to increase with socio-economic status (Stanfiel, 1973).



For blacks, the educational implications of socio-economic status are embedded in a context of social experience as a minority group subject to unusual stresses and often denied a fair share of society's resources. Most educators espouse an environment explanation of differences in measured scholastic aptitude and achievement of blacks and whites. This difference includes poor schools, bad housing, and other detrimental conditions that comprise the experimental world of black students (Stanfiel, 1973).

### Self-Esteem of African Americans

African Americans and other minority students face negative cultural stereotypes that portray members of their ethnic groups as less intelligent than European American students. Furthermore, there are statistics that suggest African American students attain lower levels of education. Although one might anticipate that these negative stereotypes and educational outcomes would pose a threat to the self-esteem of ethnic-minority students, research consistently finds that African American and other minority students have levels of self-esteem and academic self-concepts that are on average equal to or higher than those of their European American counterparts (Schmader, Major & Gramzow, 2002).

There does not appear to be a direct relationship between African American students' self-esteem and their school or academic outcomes. The link between self-esteem and academic performance among African American students may be related to how they process achievement experiences at school and in other areas of their lives (Constatine & Blackmon, 2002).

### Afrocentric Perspective

Although there appears to be considerable diversity in the knowledge base of higher education in the United States, the philosophical underpinnings of higher education are shaped primarily by one dominant worldview. Moreover, it is reasonable to assume that the predominant values undergirding the philosophical foundation of higher education are Eurocentric in nature (Schiele, 1994).

To diversify the philosophical foundation of higher education, alternative worldviews need to be considered and integrated. One alternative model is the Afrocentric model. Viewed as a major component of what is referred to as the curriculum of inclusion or multicultural education, the integration of Afrocentric content in primary and secondary schools is predicated on the assumption that African American children will perform better academically if they have knowledge of the past accomplishments of their ancestors (Schiele, 1994).

If applied to a teacher and student relationship, the Afrocentric model would emphasize a relationship based on cooperation and harmony. Every effort would be made by the teacher to foster a comfortable and inspirational learning environment so that students can feel free to manifest their full potential as learners and critical thinkers (Schiele, 1994). In addition, students would view teachers not as persons who are “out to get them” but as persons who are attempting to elicit the best in them (Schiele, 1994).

There are several ways through which African American educators can promote and integrate Afrocentricity in higher education. First, Afrocentricity can be promoted among students, colleagues, and administrators. Secondly, Afrocentricity can be

integrated through educational content. Last, it can be included in scholarly and professional activities (Schiele, 1994).

Afrocentric ideas may be disseminated rapidly among students if the educator identifies and works with a few vocal and prominent students who are actively involved in campus politics. This would create a snowball effect in which those few students would serve as messengers to other students and faculty on campus (Schiele, 1994).

Colleagues can help promote the Afrocentric perspective by having informal discussions with their colleagues. These discussions can sometimes lead to scholarly collaborations as well as significant changes in curriculum policy (Schiele, 1994).

The exposure of Afrocentricity to administrators is critical because they possess the political power needed to initiate substantive change, and such exposure increases the likelihood of Afrocentricity being integrated throughout the university or college (Schiele, 1991).

Afrocentric content can be included in the classes taught by African American educators without altering the current character of teacher or student relationship. An excellent curriculum content area to integrate Afrocentric thought is social research because this type of course has an objective to provide society with a means through which reality can be determined (Schiele, 1994).

Furthermore, applying Afrocentricity in scholarly activities is essential for reasons. First, the inclusion of Afrocentric ideas in published works and in conference and community presentations ensures the exposure of Afrocentricity to a wider audience. Second, the permanency of written communications allows an educator to promote Afrocentricity even when he or she is involved in other activities (Schiele, 1994).

### Theoretical Framework

Grounded in social capital theory is a conceptual framework that provides a foundation for studying the process variables associated with parental involvement. According to this theory, families can provide or possess three types and levels of capital: financial, human, and social. Financial capital is roughly equivalent to income or wealth. In families with low levels of financial capital or income, parents may still have high educational aspirations for their children and support their educational pursuits (Yan, 1999).

Human capital is roughly equivalent to parental education, while social capital is more closely tied to social networks and the relationships between parents and children. It also emphasizes the role of family norms, or the standards and values that govern the actions of families in society. A parent's high aspirations for a child's academic success are often an effective motivation when such norms are strong enough (Yan, 1999).

## CHAPTER III

### METHODOLOGY

Chapter III presents the method and procedures that were used in conducting the outcome evaluation. The following are described: research design, description of the site, sample and population, instrumentation, treatment of data, and limitations of the study.

#### Research Design

The descriptive and explanatory research design was used in this study. The study was designed to obtain data in order to describe the relationship among family structure, socio-economic status, and self-esteem among African American college students.

The descriptive and explanatory research design allowed for the descriptive analysis of the demographic characteristics of the respondents. Also, this research design facilitated the explanation of the statistical relationship between African American college students, family structure, socio-economic status, and self-esteem.

#### Description of the Site

The study was conducted at a Historically Black College and University in Atlanta, Georgia. The site was selected because of its' convenience to the population

served. Another major reason for the selection of this site was the availability of students who were willing to be surveyed for this study.

### Sample and Population

The priority population for this research study was composed of African American college students who currently attend a Historically Black College and University in Atlanta, Georgia. Sixty-two (62) African American students from this campus were the target group for the study.

The sample was a convenience sample of African American college students aged 18-29 that participated in the study on a Historically Black College and University campus. Each participant was asked to complete a questionnaire to verify their age, classification, family structure and income, and if their parent/guardian attended college, as well as their opinion about their family and self-esteem. A total number of sixty-two participants participated in the study.

### Instrumentation

The study utilized a questionnaire to collect data. The questionnaire was entitled *A Study of the Relationship Between Family Structure, Socio-Economic Status, and Self-Esteem Among African American College Students*. The information obtained from the questionnaire included participant demographic data and opinion responses used to gauge each person's perception of their self-esteem and family. A completed questionnaire was obtained from each participant. The questionnaire was designed to be analyzed by the Statistical Package for Social Sciences (SPSS).

Section I of the survey questionnaire consisted of six questions (1 thru 6). The questions in Section I were concerned with gender, age group, classification, family structure, parental college attendance, and family income.

Section II consisted of questions about the family and self-esteem of students. The questions measured to what extent did their family support their educational goals and it measured how the participants felt about their self-esteem. Self-esteem was computed by adding the following two variables:  $\text{COMPUTE SELFTEST} = (\text{COLLEGE} + \text{BELIEVE}) / 2$ .

#### Treatment of Data

Data were collected and analyzed by the Statistical Package for the Social Sciences (SPSS). The analysis utilized descriptive statistics, which included measures of central tendency and frequencies. A demographic profile was developed on the participants. A likert scale (1=Strongly Disagree, 2=Disagree, 3=Agree, 4=Strongly Agree) was utilized to generate frequency distribution in order to analyze participant perceptions.

Cross-tabulation was utilized to calculate chi square which was used as the test statistic to determine if there was a statistically significant relationship between the main variables of the study. Cross-tabulation were conducted between the participant's family structure and socio-economic status to their self-esteem.

### Limitations of the Study

There was one main limitation of the study. African American male students were under-represented in this study because on this Historically Black College and University campus, the majority of students are female.



## CHAPTER IV

### PRESENTATION OF FINDINGS

The purpose of this chapter was to present the findings of this study on African American college students and how their family structure and socio-economic status relate to their self-esteem. The findings are organized into two sections: demographic data and research question and hypothesis.

#### Demographic Data

A demographic profile was developed of the study participants. Descriptive statistics were used to analyze the following: age group, gender, classification, family structure, family income, parent education, and opinions about family and self-esteem.

The study population was composed of sixty-two (62) African American college students between the ages of 18-29 years who indicated that their gender were male (30.6%), female (69.4%). Participants also indicated their classification were freshman (17.9%), sophomore (19.4%), junior (27.4%), and senior (35.5%). Participants indicated that their family structure consisted of a mother only (35.5%), father only (3.2%), mother and father (50.0%).

Table 1 is a profile of the study participants. It presents the frequency distribution of the demographic variables.

Table 1

Demographics Profile of Study Participants (N=62)

| Variable                | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------------|-----------|---------|
| <b>Age Group</b>        |           |         |
| Under 20                | 20        | 32.3    |
| 20-29                   | 42        | 67.7    |
| <b>Gender</b>           |           |         |
| Male                    | 19        | 30.6    |
| Female                  | 43        | 69.4    |
| <b>Classification</b>   |           |         |
| Freshman                | 11        | 17.0    |
| Sophomore               | 12        | 19.4    |
| Junior                  | 17        | 27.4    |
| Senior                  | 22        | 35.5    |
| <b>Family Structure</b> |           |         |
| Mother Only             | 22        | 35.5    |
| Father Only             | 2         | 3.2     |
| Mother-Father           | 31        | 50.0    |
| Other                   | 7         | 11.3    |

As indicated in Table 1, the typical respondent of the study was a female African American student, who was 20-29 years old, a senior, with a family structure of a mother and father.

Table 2 is a frequency distribution of the variable Parent/Guardian/Spouse Attended College.

Table 2

Parent/Guardian/Spouse Attended College (N=62)

| Variable                                | Frequency | Percent |
|---|-----------|---------|
| Parent/guardian/spouse attended college |           |         |
| Yes                                     | 36        | 58.1    |
| No                                      | 26        | 41.9    |
| Total                                   | 62        | 100.0   |

As indicated in Table 2, the majority of participant's parent/guardian/spouse did attend college.

Table 3 is a frequency distribution of the variable Family Income.

Table 3

Family Income (N=62)

| Variable          | Frequency | Percent |
|-------------------|-----------|---------|
| Family Income     |           |         |
| Under \$30,000    | 7         | 11.3    |
| \$30,000-\$39,000 | 14        | 22.6    |
| \$40,000-\$49,000 | 8         | 12.9    |
| \$50,000-\$59,000 | 5         | 8.1     |
| \$60,000-\$69,000 | 6         | 9.7     |
| \$70,000-\$79,000 | 4         | 6.5     |
| \$80,000-\$89,000 | 6         | 9.7     |
| \$90,000-\$99,000 | 4         | 6.5     |
| \$100,000 Up      | 8         | 12.9    |
| Total             | 62        | 100.0   |

The majority (50%) of the participants indicated that their family structure was composed of a mother and father, however, only 58.1% stated that their parent/guardian/spouse attended college. As far as family income, the majority (22.6%) made \$30,000-\$39,000.

As indicated in Table 1, 2, and 3, the typical respondent of the study was a female African American student, who was 20-29 years old, a senior, with a family structure of a mother and father that attended college with a family income of \$30,000-\$39,000.

Table 4 is a frequency distribution of the variable my family supports my educational goals.

Table 4

My family supports my educational goals (N=62)

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Disagree | 5         | 8.0     |
| Agree    | 57        | 92.0    |
| Total    | 62        | 100.0   |

Table 4 indicates that of the 62 African American college students participating, 82.3% strongly agreed that their family supported their goals and 4.8% strongly disagreed that their family supported their goals.

Table 5 is a frequency distribution of the variable my family has always had adequate financial resources.

Table 5

My family has always had adequate financial resources (N=62)

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Disagree | 34        | 54.8    |
| Agree    | 18        | 45.2    |
| Total    | 62        | 100.0   |

Table 5 indicates that of the 62 African American college students participating, 40.3% disagreed that their families always had adequate financial resources.

Table 6 is a frequency distribution of the variable completing college will help me to have a successful career.

Table 6

Completing college will help me to have a successful career (N=62)

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Disagree | 1         | 42.0    |
| Agree    | 61        | 22.0    |
| Total    | 62        | 100.0   |

Table 6 reveals that of the 62 African American college students participating, 77.4% strongly agreed that completing college will help them have a successful career.

Table 7 is a frequency distribution of the variable I believe I can achieve my goals in life.

Table 7

I believe I can achieve my goals in life (N=62)

| Variable | Frequency | Percent |
|----------|-----------|---------|
| Disagree | 2         | 3.2     |
| Agree    | 60        | 96.8    |
| Total    | 62        | 100.0   |

Table 7 reveals that of the 62 African American college students participating, 83.9% strongly agreed and 3.2% disagreed that they believe they can achieve their goals in life.

### Research Questions and Hypotheses

Research Question 1: Is there a relationship between the socio-economic status of the family of African American students and self-esteem?

Hypothesis 1: There is no statistical significance relationship between the socio-economic status of an African American student and self-esteem.

Table 8 is a cross-tabulation of the participants self-esteem and family structure. It shows the relationship between the two variables and indicates whether there was a relationship between the participant's self-esteem and family structure.

Table 8

Cross-tabulation of family structure by self-esteem (N = 62)

|                  | <u>Self-Esteem</u> |     |       |      |       |       |
|------------------|--------------------|-----|-------|------|-------|-------|
|                  | Disagree           |     | Agree |      | Total |       |
|                  | #                  | %   | #     | %    | #     | %     |
| <hr/>            |                    |     |       |      |       |       |
| Family Structure |                    |     |       |      |       |       |
| Mother Only      | 2                  | 3.2 | 20    | 32.3 | 22    | 35.5  |
| Father Only      | 0                  | 0.0 | 2     | 3.2  | 2     | 3.2   |
| Mother-Father    | 0                  | 0.0 | 31    | 50.0 | 31    | 50.0  |
| Other            | 0                  | 0.0 | 7     | 11.3 | 7     | 11.3  |
| Total            | 2                  | 3.2 | 60    | 96.8 | 62    | 100.0 |
| <hr/>            |                    |     |       |      |       |       |
| Chi square =.289 | df 3               |     |       |      |       |       |

As shown in Table 8, the chi square test indicated that there was not a statistically significant relationship (.289) between participants family structure and self-esteem at the .05 level of probability.

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between the family structures of African American students and self-esteem?

Hypothesis 2: There is no statistical significance relationship between the family structure of an African American student and self-esteem.



Table 9 is a cross-tabulation of the participants self-esteem and family financial resources. It shows the relationship between the two variables and indicates whether there was a relationship between financial resources and self-esteem among African American college students.

Table 9

Cross-tabulation of financial resources by self-esteem (N=62)

|                              | <u>Self-Esteem</u> |     |       |      | Total |       |
|------------------------------|--------------------|-----|-------|------|-------|-------|
|                              | Disagree           |     | Agree |      |       |       |
|                              | #                  | %   | #     | %    | #     | %     |
| <hr/>                        |                    |     |       |      |       |       |
| Adequate Financial Resources |                    |     |       |      |       |       |
| Disagree                     | 2                  | 3.2 | 32    | 51.6 | 34    | 54.8  |
| Agree                        | 0                  | 0.0 | 28    | 45.2 | 28    | 45.2  |
| Total                        | 2                  | 3.2 | 60    | 96.8 | 62    | 100.0 |
| <hr/>                        |                    |     |       |      |       |       |
| Chi square =.192 df 1        |                    |     |       |      |       |       |

As shown in Table 9, the chi square test indicated that there was not a statistically significant relationship (.192) between participants family financial resources and self-esteem at the .05 level of probability.

## CHAPTER V

### DISCUSSION OF FINDINGS

This study was designed to describe the relationship between African American college students family structure, socio-economic status and self-esteem. The study also analyzed the target population and answered two research questions about the family structure, socio-economic status, and self-esteem among African American college students.

#### Summary of the Study

The conclusions and recommendations of the research findings are presented in this chapter. Each question is presented in order to summarize the significant findings of interest.

Research Question 1: Is there a relationship between the socio-economic status of the family of African American students and self-esteem?

In order to determine if there was a relationship between the socio-economic status of the family of African American students and self-esteem among sixty-two participants of the study from a Historical Black College and University, a cross-tabulation of the two variables was tabulated. The analysis indicated that of

the 62 participants, 60 or 96.8 percent agreed that there was a relationship between the two variables. Also, when the test statistic (chi square) was applied the results indicated that there was not a statistically significant relationship (.289) at the .05 level of probability between the two variables.

Research Question 2: Is there a relationship between the family structures of African American students and self-esteem?

In order to determine if there was a relationship between the family structures of African American students and self-esteem among sixty-two participants in the study from a Historically Black College and University, a cross-tabulation of the two variables was tabulated.

The analysis indicated that of the 62 participants, 60 or 96.8 percent agreed that there was a relationship between the two variables. Also, when the test statistic (chi square) was applied the results indicated that there was not a statistically significant relationship (.192) at the .05 level of probability between the two variables.

#### Implications for Social Work Practice

The results of this study provided insights on how social workers can play a role in the education of African American students. Utilizing the findings from the study, social workers have the opportunity to make sure that the self-esteem of African American college students does not become low while in college and before attending.

The implementation of social work services has the potential to improve the educational success of African American students.

As a result of the findings of this study, the researcher is recommending the following:

1. A larger sample of African American college students in an additional study would add to the outcome of this research.
2. Efforts by Colleges and Universities should be undertaken in order to identify those students who made be in need of assistance with their self-esteem.

## APPENDICES

APPENDIX A  
INFORMED CONSENT

Consent Form

You are invited to participate in a research study conducted by Shannah Pinkston, from Clark Atlanta University School of Social Work. I hope to learn the relationship between socio-economic status and family structure and how they affect the self-esteem of African American college students.

There are no risks to completing this survey. However, I cannot guarantee you will receive any benefits from this research.

Any information that is obtained in connection with this study and that can be identified with you will remain confidential. The only other entity that the information will be released to, will be the administration of Clark Atlanta University School of Social Work for completion of my course requirement.

If you have any questions, please feel free to contact myself at 706-513-7985 or contact my advisor Dr. Robert Waymer at 404-880-8561.

Your signature indicates that you have read and understand the information provided above, that you willingly agree to participate, that you may withdraw your consent at any time and discontinue participation without penalty.

Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

APPENDIX B

IRB APPROVAL LETTER



CLARK ATLANTA UNIVERSITY

Institutional Review Board  
Office of Sponsored Programs

December 11, 2008

Shannah Pinkston <Chiengle2@yahoo.com>

School of Social Work  
Clark Atlanta University  
Atlanta, GA 30314

RE: A Study of the Relationship Between Family Structure, Socio-Economic  
Status and Self-Esteem Among African American College Students.

Principal Investigators: Shannah Pinkston

Human Subjects Code Number: HR2008-11-288-1

Dear Ms Pinkston:

The Human Subjects Committee of the Institutional Review Board (IRB) has  
reviewed your protocol and approved of it as exempt in accordance with 45  
CFR 46.101(b)(2).

Your Protocol Approval Code is HR2008-11-288-1/A

This permit will expire on December 30, 2009. Thereafter, continued  
approval is contingent upon the annual submission of a renewal form to this  
office. If you have any questions, please contact Dr. Georgianna Bolden at  
the Office of Sponsored Programs (404) 880-6979 or Dr. Paul I. Musey,  
(404) 880-6829.

Sincerely:

Paul I. Musey, Ph.D.  
Chair

IRB: Human Subjects Committee

cc. "Dr. Robert Waymer" <[redacted]>

Office of Sponsored Programs, "Dr. Georgianna Bolden" <gbolden@cau.edu>

APPENDIX C  
SURVEY QUESTIONNAIRE

A STUDY OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN FAMILY STRUCTURE,  
SOCIO-ECONOMIC STATUS, AND SELF-ESTEEM AMONG  
AFRICAN AMERICAN COLLEGE STUDENTS

**Section I: Demographic Information**

Place a mark (x) next to the appropriate item. Choose only one answer for each statement.

1. My age group: 1)\_\_\_Under 20 2)\_\_\_20-29 3)\_\_\_30-39 4)\_\_\_40 & over
2. My gender: 1)\_\_\_Male 2)\_\_\_Female
3. My classification: 1)\_\_\_Freshman 2)\_\_\_Sophomore 3)\_\_\_Junior 4)\_\_\_Senior
4. My family Structure: 1)\_\_\_Mother only 2)\_\_\_Father only 3)\_\_\_Mother and Father  
4)\_\_\_Grandparent 5)\_\_\_Other Relative 6)\_\_\_Spouse(husband/wife) 7)\_\_\_Other
5. My parent(s)/guardian/spouse attended college: 1)\_\_\_Yes 2)\_\_\_No
6. My approximate family income: 1)\_\_\_under \$30,000 2)\_\_\_\$30,000-\$39,999  
3)\_\_\_\$40,000-\$49,999 4)\_\_\_\$50,000-\$59,999 5)\_\_\_\$60,000-\$69,999  
6)\_\_\_\$70,000-\$79,000 7)\_\_\_\$80,000-\$89,999 8)\_\_\_\$90,000-\$99,999  
9)\_\_\_\$100,000 and up



## APPENDIX C

(continued)

**Section II: Instrument**

The following statements are designed to get your opinion about your self-esteem and family. Write the appropriate number (1 thru 4) in the blank space in front of each statement on the questionnaire. Please respond to all questions.

**1=Strongly Disagree 2=Disagree 3=Agree 4=Strongly Agree**

- \_\_\_ 7. My family supports my educational goals.
- \_\_\_ 8. My family has always had adequate financial resources.
- \_\_\_ 9. Completing college will help me to have a successful career.
- \_\_\_ 10. I believe I can achieve my goals in life.

## APPENDIX D

### SPSS PROGRAM ANALYSIS

TITLE 'FAMILY STRUCTURE,STATUS AND SELF ESTEEM OF AFRICAN AMERICANS'.  
SUBTITLE 'Shannah Pinkston MSW Program'.

DATA LIST FIXED/

|          |     |
|----------|-----|
| ID       | 1-3 |
| AGEGRP   | 4   |
| GENDER   | 5   |
| CLASS    | 6   |
| FAMILY   | 7   |
| PARENT   | 8   |
| INCOME   | 9   |
| SUPPORT  | 10  |
| RESOURCE | 11  |
| COLLEGE  | 12  |
| BELIEVE  | 13. |

COMPUTE SELFEST = (COLLEGE+BELIEVE)/2.

VARIABLE LABELS

|          |  |
|----------|--|
| ID       | 'Questionnaire number'   |
| AGEGRP   | 'Q1 My age group'  |
| GENDER   | 'Q2 My Gender'   |
| CLASS    | 'Q3 My classification'   |
| FAMILY   | 'Q4 My family structure'   |
| PARENT   | 'Q5 My parents-guardian-spouse attended college'                 |
| INCOME   | 'Q6 My family income'  |
| SUPPORT  | 'Q7 My family supports my educational goals'                     |
| RESOURCE | 'Q8 My family has always had adequate financial resources'       |
| COLLEGE  | 'Q9 Completing college will help me to have a successful career' |
| BELIEVE  | 'Q10 I believe I can achieve my goals in life'.                  |

VALUE LABELS

|        |               |
|--------|---------------|
| AGEGRP |               |
| 1      | 'Under 20'    |
| 2      | '20-29'       |
| 3      | '30-39'       |
| 4      | '40 and up'/' |
| GENDER |               |
| 1      | 'Male'        |
| 2      | 'Female'/'    |

## APPENDIX D

(continued)

## CLASS

- 1 'Freshman'
- 2 'Sophomore'
- 3 'Junior'
- 4 'Senior'/'

## FAMILY

- 1 'Mother only'
- 2 'Father only'
- 3 'Mother-Father'
- 4 'Grandparent'
- 5 'Other Relative'
- 6 'Spouse Hus-Wife'
- 7 'Other'/'

## PARENT

- 1 'Yes'
- 2 'No'/'

## INCOME

- 1 'Under \$30,000'
- 2 '\$30,000-39,999'
- 3 '\$40,000-49,999'
- 4 '\$50,000-59,999'
- 5 '\$60,000-69,999'
- 6 '\$70,000-79,999'
- 7 '\$80,000-89,999'
- 8 '\$90,000-99,999'
- 9 '\$100,000 up'/'

## SUPPORT

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree'/'

## RESOURCE

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree'/'

## COLLEGE

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree'/'

## BELIEVE

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree'/'

## APPENDIX D

(continued)

SELFEST

- 1 'Strongly Disagree'
- 2 'Disagree'
- 3 'Agree'
- 4 'Strongly Agree'/.

RECODE SUPPORT RESOURCE COLLEGE BELIEVE (1 THRU 2.99=2) (3 THRU 4.99=3).  
RECODE SELFEST (1 THRU 2.99=2) (3 THRU 4.99=3).

MISSING VALUES

AGEGRP GENDER CLASS FAMILY  
PARENT INCOME SUPPORT RESOURCE COLLEGE BELIEVE (0).

BEGIN DATA

0012233174444  
0021231124344  
0032243154444  
0042141184144  
0052241164334  
0062142194444  
0072241234344  
0082231124243  
0092243243234  
0102233254244  
0112133124334  
0122231154244  
0132133234444  
0142123294244  
0151213183344  
0162133294444  
0171123144244  
0182241134234  
0191123244344  
0202231174344  
0212233164444  
0222137114244  
0231212224243  
0242241214133  
0251223184444  
0261227254243  
0271223164444  
0281211212234  
0292231222144  
0302223144244  
0312243174244  
0322241224344  
0332237224344  
0342243193234

## APPENDIX D

(continued)

0351113174444  
0361223154344  
0371223194344  
0382243154444  
0392121134334  
0402143194234  
0411211224244  
0421221234243  
0432131123244  
0441111234343  
0451221211111  
0462247213144  
0472241224244  
0482241211231  
0492137194234  
0501113134434  
0512113284244  
0522141221144  
0532247124244  
0542241174444  
0552247214144  
0562243124344  
0572143144244  
0582233174344  
0592233163233  
0601213194444  
0611213224143  
0621213234144  
END DATA.

FREQUENCIES  
/VARIABLES AGEGRP GENDER CLASS FAMILY  
PARENT INCOME SUPPORT RESOURCE COLLEGE BELIEVE SELFEST  
/STATISTICS=.

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